

FCC:

Thank you for taking comments on the review of broadcast ownership rules.

Our country is at an important crossroad in its history. September 11 has shaken the assumptions and understandings of many Americans.

This tragedy as well as subsequent U.S. and world events have caused people around me to ask questions about important issues concerning religion, politics, and history. People are seeking help to comprehend contemporary affairs and make informed decisions as citizens.

This process is best served by a diversity of views from which citizens can make their evaluations. Individual choice and the free exchange of ideas are cornerstones of American liberty and democracy. Further consolidation of media ownership would not serve to broaden and enrich public discussion. Recent consolidations have indeed had the opposite effect. On radio, news programming has been drastically minimized and local coverage virtually eliminated. On television, the drive for ratings has pushed news shows toward the lowest common denominators of simplicity and sensationalism. In general, broadcasters have shown a decreasing sense of public responsibility. The best way to save informed public discussion is through a diverse media owned by local and regional interests that serve in addition to the national and international media businesses already sufficiently represented on American airwaves.

The bandwidths of telecommunication are owned by the American citizenry. Large-scale commercial concerns are important, but the interests of American democracy, of a free and rigorous exchange of ideas, should not entirely depend on this single consideration.

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